



The Flashlight

Green River Crossing—The Latest on Park Planning for the Future

In April of this year, the park conducted two public scoping meetings in Edmonson County regarding planning to improve traffic flow between the south side of the park and the north side of the park. A thirty-day public comment period followed, closing on May 14, 2009.

The park received 53 written comments either via the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website or by mail. By far, the majority of the comments were in favor of one of the bridge concepts presented, or a similar variation.

This newsletter gives a summary of the public comments and outlines the next steps the park will take in the planning process.

My thanks to those who attended the meetings, and to those who shared their comments and ideas during the public comment period. Public involvement is essential to management of the parklands.

Sincerely,

Patrick H. Reed
Superintendent



Summary of Public Scoping Comments

Transportation

53 comments were received.

47 comments (87 percent) favored one of the bridge concepts or a similar variation. The reason stated by most of the responders who preferred a bridge option was a desire to cross the river 24 hours/day, seven days/week. Although closings related to water levels cause an inconvenience, the 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. operation schedule also causes hardships for local residents, regarding work schedules and/or evening activities.

- 29 favored Alternative 2, a low bridge. These included a letter on behalf of the Edmonson County Industrial Authority, and two resolutions, one from the Edmonson County Fiscal Court and one from the Mammoth Cave National Park Association Board of Directors.
- 10 favored Alternative 1, a high bridge
- 8 favored any bridge
- Two comments favored keeping the ferry as the method of crossing Green River at the site.
- One comment expressed a preference to build a low bridge and also maintain the ferry.

Secondary uses of the Green River Ferry site

13 comments addressed secondary uses of the ferry site. Nine favored maintaining boat and canoe access in some form; four of these mentioned the need for parking.

Other comments included a desire for a bridge to be high enough to avoid the need to portage; a desire that the low bridge blend with the natural setting; and a desire for the park to adopt and maintain the informal trail for fishing on the northern bank.

Next Steps

During this planning process, the park has received many valuable comments and questions from park users and area residents.

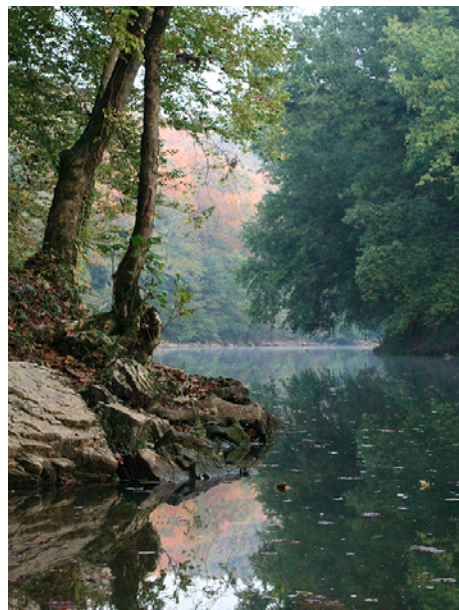
The drafting of the environmental assessment for this project is continuing, factoring in public input and new information that will be generated by the following studies:

1. This summer, a mussel survey will be conducted in the vicinity of the Green River Ferry. The mussel survey requires low river levels, which have not yet occurred this summer. A sediment transport study is also being planned. Information from these studies will be used in the preparation of a biological assessment, as required by the Endangered Species Act.
2. A physical survey of the river bottom at the crossing will be undertaken along with core sampling of the sediments.
3. More detailed concepts and cost estimates for construction and

maintenance of each alternative—high bridge, low bridge, or ferry improvements—are being developed.

4. The park will further assess public needs and the costs associated with extended hours of ferry operation.
5. In the coming year, electronic dynamic message boards will be permanently installed at key locations along the park boundary to inform drivers of the status of ferry operations before they enter the park.

Early in 2010, a preferred alternative and draft environmental assessment will be released to the public for review and comment.



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The Flashlight is the official newsletter of Mammoth Cave National Park, and is produced by the Office of the Superintendent. For more information about this edition, or about the park:

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